

DESPITE a lion-hearted performance by Geoff Anthony, who almost took on Wycombe Wanderers single-handed, Slough Town made too many basic errors to stand any chance of taking Monday's Berks and Bucks Senior Cup final at Wokingham Town.

After taking an early lead through Larry Pritchard, Wycombe were handed a goal on a plate by Slough's goalkeeper, Peter Spittle, and after pulling back to 1-2, the Rebels threw away any further chance of progress by conceding a needless penalty in the second half.

It was all too easy for Wycombe who, 3-1 up, relaxed their grip in the second half and finished the match at half speed. After such a bright opening half, the later stages were eminently disappointing.

One man who certainly didn't deserve to finish on the losing side however, was Welshman Geoff Anthony. A former Wycombe Wanderer, he held the Rebels side together for much of the game and when not involved with the play himself, was full of encouragement for his colleagues. Without him, Town would be nothing more than a very ordinary outfit.

MAN OF THE MATCH

Inevitably, it was Geoff who snatched Slough's only goal with a superb individual effort. But it was not just the goal that made him the undoubted "man of the match". His all round contribution to the game was immeasurable. Running everywhere, he gave the Blues defence a severe testing, switching from wing to wing, moving back to help out the defence and then popping up in the Wycombe penalty area, where he presented his greatest threat.

But Anthony couldn't do it alone. Only Trevor Williams, another Welsh international and centre back Mick Cannon, can look back on their performances with any degree of satisfaction.

Wycombe deserve credit for the way they snapped up their chances but after being 2-0 up by the 15th minute they could and should have stamped their authority on the game there and then. They did enough, however, and apart from Slough's spirited revival in the late stages of the first half, they seldom looked in difficulty.

No one individual stood out in their success, although Tony Horsemann and Keith Mead

By STUART EARP Wycombe Wanderers 3, Slough Town 1 (at Wokingham)

deserve credit for their contributions. Horsemann, despite playing with an eye injury, took his chance well with the second goal and slotted home the second half penalty to put the match beyond doubt — his 36th goal of the term. Mead was the king pin of the defence and gave the Slough strikers very little change all afternoon.

And 'so Wanderers, to the enthusiastic cheers from their faithful supporters, took the trophy for the 15th time. And in winning on Monday they made their personal score against Slough 2-2 in recent County Cup finals. Having lost two years running in 1971 and 1972, they repeated their success of last year when they won 1-0 at the Meadow, Chesham.

The return of Horsemann meant Evans dropped out of the side despite his much improved performance at Barking the previous Saturday. Ian Rundle also returned to the full-back spot, giving his

usual 100 per cent, while Terry Reardon, whose mouth was badly swollen due to a knock at Barking, switched back to midfield.

For any other game, I expect Terry would have dropped out and rested the injury but the chance of playing against his former colleagues was too good to miss. Keith Mead was also up against his old club, while Anthony, Barrie Davies and Peter Spittle had all played for Wycombe at one time.

The difference in attitude to this game was clearly demonstrated early on. Whereas Wycombe looked relaxed, Slough were soon making errors and the opening goal in the 10th minute was always on the cards. Wycombe had been pumping the ball up the right flank ceaselessly in the first ten minutes where they spotted a definite weakness in John Beyer and Terry Watts.

It was pressure on these two

that brought the goal. Winning a corner on the right, the ball was half cleared to Phil Wood. He clipped the ball over a square defence where Larry Pritchard stole in unmarked and tucked the ball past Spittle as Slough stood and watched. It was a beautifully worked goal.

Wanderers continued to exploit the right hand weakness in the Rebels' defence and Steve Perrin often forced his way through to send over dangerous crosses. Slough were just not marking close enough and Steve enjoyed more time and space than he has for a long time.

FREE GIFT

The second goal, five minutes later, again came from the right. Watts' poor clearance was intercepted by Pritchard who sent in a flighted cross towards the far post where Peter Spittle seemed to have the danger under control. But, to the horror of

his colleagues, he took his eye off the ball momentarily and dropped it right onto the head of Tony Horsemann. "Bodger" doesn't waste free gifts like that.

It was a perfect start for Wycombe and one which they should have capitalised upon immediately. Slough were in all sorts of trouble at the back, nervously misplacing their passes. Once Spittle threw the ball out of play when trying to find his full-back.

Eventually, however, Town settled down and began to play constructive soccer. Barrie Davies sent in their first real shot of the half in the 25th minute after Anthony had seen his drive blocked by a defender. Davies went even closer two minutes later after a series of neat inter-passing, when he banged in a swerving cross-shot which flew just wide with Maskell struggling. Then Anthony struck.

His goal in the 29th minute was undoubtedly the highlight of the afternoon and capped a brilliant personal performance. It was Anthony who began the move with a defence splitting ball through to Williams. He crossed on the left foot for Anthony to pick up the return pass and move inside the penalty area. Looking up, he spotted Maskell fractionally off his line and coolly chipped the ball over the 'keeper's head and into the top of the net.

Forcing two quick corners, Slough began to take the initiative and yet at the back they were still woefully suspect. Pritchard almost sneaked through onto two poor pass-backs and just before the break Wycombe had a chance to go further ahead when Hollifield bore down on Spittle, who had come out to collect the ball. Seeing the danger too late, the 'keeper could only block the ball with his legs and Hollifield crossed the rebound invitingly into the middle. Pritchard, however, nudged the ball just past the upright.

It was somewhat fitting that Anthony should get in the last shot of the half but after the interval, he and Slough began to tire.

Facing the strong wind, Wanderers went close when Horsemann dummied Reardon's throw-in and left the ball for Perrin to fire in a strong drive but Cannon managed to deflect it away for a corner. Seconds later Spittle had to be at his best to beat out Horsemann's fine cross.

As the game deteriorated, Slough threw away any chance of the trophy when Alan Davies conceded the penalty in the 72nd minute. Covering back he was under no pressure collecting Reardon's throw-in but controlled the ball with his arm right in front of the linesman. Referee Faulkner had no hesitation in awarding the penalty which Horsemann promptly clipped past Spittle, who chose the wrong way.

Steve Perrin, troubled by an eye injury, gave way to Graham Mackenzie with 74 minutes gone. Wycombe playing four men in midfield for the remainder of the game.

This, however, did nothing to lift the match out of the doldrums. Wycombe seemed content with their lead while Slough looked a well beaten side — and knew it. The crowd also had to suffer a tedious two minute wait when the supply of match balls ran out. Several were booted over the stand to the nearby railway line throughout the match and none, it seemed, had gone to retrieve them.

With passes constantly going astray from both sides, the match petered out badly and only one fine effort from Williams resembled a goal chance. Picking up a throughball from Terry Brown, he was given too much room for a shot by the Blues defence but sent it rising over the bar when well placed.

Wycombe skipper Larry Pritchard received the trophy from Mr. Douglas Goodchild, chairman of the Berks and Bucks F.A.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, K. Mead, D. Bullock, R. Grant; P. Wood, T. Reardon, M. Hollifield, S. Perrin (sub: J. Mackenzie, 74 mins.), A. Horsemann, L. Pritchard.

SLOUGH: P. Spittle; S. Crosby, M. Cannon, T. Watts, J. Beyer; B. Davies, A. Davies, T. Williams, T. Brown, T. Turl, G. Anthony. Sub: T. Male (not used).

Referee: J. Faulkner (Didcot).

Half-time: 2-1. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Horsemann 2 (15, 72 pen.), Pritchard (10); Slough — Anthony (29).

Official attendance: 1,920.



A jubilant Tony Horsemann with the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup after Monday's 3-1 triumph over Slough Town at Wokingham. Players from left to right: Ian Rundle, Steve Perrin, Keith Mead, Dave Bullock, John Maskell, Phil Wood, Tony Horsemann, Larry Pritchard, Roger Grant and Graham Mackenzie.



Peter Spittle is hopelessly out of position to prevent Larry Pritchard (out of picture) putting Wycombe Wanderers one up